

Hayesfield School Technology College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109292
Local Authority	Bath And North-East Somerset
Inspection number	324940
Inspection dates	11 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Paul Sadler

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Girls (mixed sixth form)
Number on roll	
School (total)	1,144
Sixth form	219
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Colin McInnes
Headteacher	Erica Draisey
Date of previous school inspection	17–18 May 2006
School address	Upper Oldfield Park Bath BA2 3LA
Telephone number	01225 426151
Fax number	01225 427006

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. They evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues.

- The impact of leadership and management on pupils' achievement, including the quality of subject leadership, monitoring and evaluation, data analysis and the process of setting targets.
- The impact of the school's work to improve behaviour and attendance.
- The quality of the guidance given to pupils, including the school's work to promote community cohesion.

Evidence was gathered by observing lessons, scrutinising documents and pupils' work, and from discussions with staff and pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not evaluated in detail but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This large girls' school serves the central area of Bath. The great majority of pupils are White British; the remainder are from a wide range of ethnic groups. A few pupils speak languages other than English at home. The proportion of pupils with diverse learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. Boys are admitted into the large sixth form.

The school has recently received re-designation for a further period of funding for its technology specialism. It is a member of a recently formed education trust with other secondary schools, further and higher education establishments and private sector partners. The school is located on two main sites. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 are educated in the lower school; those in Years 10 to 14 in the upper school and nearby sixth form base.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school in which pupils' achievement is excellent. Dynamic and forward-looking leadership, especially by the headteacher, has created an environment in which pupils have the opportunity to thrive in their education. To quote a parent, 'The school's excellence is its ability to nurture pupils and give them confidence in themselves.' Pupils have high aspirations, and are clear about how these might be achieved because of the excellent academic guidance they receive. Pupils make excellent progress. In 2008, those leaving Year 11 attained standards that were above average in GCSE, having entered the school with standards that were below average. The school recognised that girls of average attainment made less progress than they might, and adapted the curriculum to ensure this was not repeated. The current Year 11 had attained broadly average standards on starting at the school. They are well on course to achieve the extremely challenging targets that the school has set for them, which represent high standards. The school analyses their progress accurately and carefully, and staff have access to detailed and accurate data that enables them to offer support in any area where pupils are slipping behind. In particular, the school is focusing on ensuring that as many pupils as possible attain at least five good GCSE passes including English and mathematics, and can show that 65% of Year 11 are likely to achieve this, a high percentage. Pupils' work and their results in modular GCSE tests and examinations confirm this rapid progress and high standards. The skills pupils will need in adult life are developing in an excellent manner. In a Year 11 mathematics lesson for lower attaining pupils, girls worked together to calculate the amount of material needed to clothe a person. They enthusiastically discussed the most efficient ways of doing this, and the differences arising from matters such as size and style. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make excellent progress, in part due to the very good support they receive from teaching assistants.

Teaching is excellent because it is regularly monitored and ways of improving it are discussed and implemented. Weaknesses are identified and tackled. Subject leaders are dynamic, enthusiastic and capable. Senior leaders set a clear direction and very demanding expectations, but allow staff appropriate autonomy to develop their subject. Within this context, one subject leader described the headteacher as 'the dream head'! It is this mix of high expectations and encouragement of innovation that has led to leadership and management having an outstanding impact on pupils' achievement. The excellent curriculum is refined to meet the needs of year groups and individuals, such as by the introduction of vocational GCSE subjects including electronics and catering, and access level courses in basic skills. The school is a leader in the development of collaboration between educational establishments to widen curriculum opportunities for pupils and students aged 14 to 19, and has played a major part in the establishment of an educational trust aimed at further widening opportunities and ensuring the long-term sustainability of these developments.

The school has made excellent use of its technology specialism. Almost all girls take a technology course at GCSE and demanding targets for their attainment are usually met. There is excellent collaboration between technology and subjects such as mathematics and science. The school has developed and tested exciting learning

resources for primary schools, to encourage their pupils' skills and interest in technology.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. There is a strong ethos of tolerance and mutual respect. Pupils have many opportunities for spiritual and cultural experience, for instance through the school's excellent provision for music, which includes choirs and an award-winning wind band, and through educational visits within the United Kingdom and abroad. Because of this provision, and the work done locally to develop educational partnerships, the school makes an excellent contribution to community cohesion. Pupils of all ethnic groups report a tolerant atmosphere and the rare instances of bullying are dealt with effectively. Behaviour overall is excellent, although the school has used short exclusions as a major behaviour improvement strategy in recent years, leading to figures for these that are a little high. Attendance is average and is affected by a group of persistent absentees. Many of these pupils are young carers, or themselves have long-term illnesses. The school uses a wide range of strategies to re-engage these pupils, who report that they receive excellent support and individual help to ensure they achieve as well as possible. The actions taken have had a positive impact on pupils' attendance. Pupils have a very good understanding of how to keep healthy and safe, although, due to the very limited facilities on the upper school site, pupils in Years 10 to 14 have insufficient opportunities for sport and exercise. Pupils value the many additional opportunities they have, including working in partnership with pupils at local boys' and mixed schools.

Pupils receive excellent care, guidance and support. They say there are adults in school they trust and, in general, parents are happy with the care their children receive. A minority of parents expressed a range of concerns to inspectors. The most common concerns were pupils' behaviour, for which no supporting evidence was found, and the monitoring and consistency of homework, on which there was insufficient evidence to form a view. It is, however, clear that teachers mark work regularly and with helpful comments, and that pupils have an excellent knowledge of their targets and of how to improve their work. Sixth form students in particular speak warmly of the excellent help they receive in preparation for application for higher education, and it is clear that careers education and guidance are excellent. The school meets current requirements for child protection and safeguarding, although its attention was drawn to a minor shortcoming in the way information on staff is recorded.

Leaders and managers, including governors, have an excellent, in depth understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have drawn up plans of very high quality to tackle the latter. These include demanding, measurable success criteria and appropriate timescales. Plans for the necessary development of facilities for sport and the arts are at an advanced stage. Monitoring and evaluation at all levels within the school are excellent. Governors monitor the school's work through regular reports on the extent to which key performance indicators are being met, which is a model of effective practice. The school has made outstanding improvements since the last inspection and is in an excellent position for these to continue.

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 1

While the sixth form was not inspected in detail on this occasion, there is good evidence to support the school's evaluation that standards achieved and provision generally are outstanding, as they are in the rest of the school. Standards attained are above average and students make excellent progress in relation to their starting points. Almost all students progress to the higher education course of their choice. Students and parents support the school's assertion that teaching in the sixth form is outstanding, with teachers giving extra time to provide individual support. For example, a student commented on the help she had received from several staff in preparing her portfolio of artwork for higher education application. Students make an excellent contribution to the school community, for instance by acting as prefects and tutors, including to pupils in the lower school. All, including boys and girls who have entered the school in the sixth form, speak warmly about the opportunities it offers and the high quality of education they receive.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils and students in Years 10 to 14 have greater opportunities for sport and exercise.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.	School Overall	16–19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1	

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
How well learners enjoy their education	2	
The attendance of learners	3	
The behaviour of learners	1	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1	
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

Annex B

02 March 2009

Dear Pupils and Students

**Inspection of Hayesfield School Technology College,
Bath BA2 3LA**



Thank you to those of you who spoke with us when we visited recently. We found you articulate, confident and rightly positive about your school. These are the main findings of our inspection.

Hayesfield is an outstanding school. These are some of the best things about it.

You make excellent progress and attain standards in GCSE and A Level that are above average. Those of you in Year 11 are on course to reach exceptionally high standards.

You have an excellent understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues. In part, this is due to features of the school such as the excellent music provision and the many educational visits in the UK and abroad. You behave very well and in most cases you all get on well with each other and with the staff. When there are problems the staff help you sort them out. Those of you who, for whatever reason, find coming to school difficult, are given lots of support.

The teaching is excellent. Lessons are interesting and relevant. They help you develop skills such as teamwork and persuasive argument. The staff know how you are getting on and tell you how to improve your work. You are set demanding targets, and you are all working hard to reach and exceed these.

You all benefit from the school's technology status and by the collaboration with other schools and colleges. This gives you a wider range of study opportunities, especially in Years 10 to 14.

We were impressed by the way you all contribute to the school, such as the sixth form prefects helping the younger girls.

Much of the school's success is due to the excellent leadership of the headteacher, other staff and governors.

We have asked the school to improve your opportunities for sport and exercise, especially in the upper school. We are sure the planned building programme will help to achieve this.

Wishing you all the best in the future.
Yours faithfully

Paul Sadler
Lead inspector